

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Valparaiso Downtown Commercial District
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number roughly along Lincolnway and Franklin Avenue N/A not for publication
city, town Valparaiso N/A vicinity
state Indiana code IN county Porter code 127 zip code 46383

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- ☒ private
☒ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

- ☐ building(s)
☒ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>76</u>	<u>22</u> buildings
	<u> </u> sites
	<u> </u> structures
<u>1</u>	<u> </u> objects
<u>77</u>	<u>22</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously
listed in the National Register 3

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this
☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the
National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.
In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official

Date

Department of Natural Resources

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined eligible for the National
Register. ☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined not eligible for the
National Register.
☐ removed from the National Register.
☐ other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Commerce/Trade: business, professional,
financial, specialty, department store,
restaurant

Social: meeting hall

Government: city hall, fire station, post office

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Commerce/Trade: business, professional,
financial, specialty, department store,
restaurant

Government: city hall, fire station,
post office

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone/Concrete

walls Brick

Stone: limestone, sandstone

roof Asphalt

other Metal: tin, cast iron

Greek Revival

Gothic Revival

Italianate

Queen Anne

Classical Revival

Commercial Style

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Valparaiso Downtown Commercial District is located in the city of Valparaiso in Porter County in northwestern Indiana. Located in what is known as the Calumet region of Indiana, it is approximately 12 miles south of Lake Michigan and 15 miles from the city of Gary. It is situated along the crest of a geologic feature known as the Valparaiso Moraine, a low ridge left by the receding glaciers of the last Ice Age. To the north lay the dunes of Lake Michigan; to the south, the prairie and swampland of the Kankakee River valley.

The most famous trail of the region in the nineteenth century, the Sauk Trail, ran along the Valparaiso Moraine, then northeasterly to Laporte and New Carlisle, and southwesterly to Schererville and Merrillville. The major highways leading into Valparaiso today include Route 2 from the northeast and southwest, Route 130 from the northwest, and Route 49 from the north and south. State Road 30, a major east-west highway across northern Indiana, passes just south of the city.

The historic district is a compact area centered along Lincolnway, the city's principal east-west thoroughfare. It is traversed by six crossing streets running north and south, the principal two being Washington Street and Franklin Avenue flanking either side of a courthouse square. This square, bounded on the north by Lincolnway and on the south by Indiana Avenue, is a landscaped, park-like block with one building, the courthouse, located at its center. It is surrounded by commercial buildings on all four sides, with the exception of one half block on the west side which is presently a parking lot. Morgan Street forms the district's eastern boundary; Napoleon Street forms its western boundary.

The district contains 102 buildings, most of which are commercial, with a small number of prominent civic and governmental buildings located on Lincolnway and on or around the courthouse square. The grid plan of the streets and the rectangular configuration of the lots determined the plan shapes of most of the buildings. With a few exceptions, typical store buildings have narrow street frontages but extend back two to three times their width. One large department store building, the former Lowenstine's (bldgs. #98, 99, 100 photo 52), is more than one half block in width. Nearly all of the structures are of brick masonry, and are two or three stories in height. They typically have a flat roof with a parapet on the street side. The second level facade of most of these buildings is original while the street level has in most cases been altered with the addition of a modern commercial front of wood or aluminum and glass. The civic and governmental buildings were built of brick or limestone, and feature a more distinctive form, articulation, and roof shape.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally

Applicable National Register Criteria ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Commerce

Politics/Government

Period of Significance

c. 1870-1930

Significant Dates

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Beck, Frederick/ Cochrane, John C./ Lembke,
Charles/ Stiles, George S./ Whetmore,
James A./ Wilson, John D.

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Valparaiso Downtown Commercial District is significant for its nineteenth and early twentieth century architecture, its history of commerce and retail trade, and its political role as the county seat of Porter County. It has an excellent and cohesive collection of Italianate, Queen Anne, and Commercial Style buildings surrounding a Classical Style County Courthouse prominently located on a landscaped town square. The district has been the center of Valparaiso's commercial trade, with numerous specialty and department stores intermixed with restaurants, offices, and financial institutions. At the same time, the Courthouse, along with a nearby City Hall and former County Jail, make it symbolically and functionally the political and governmental heart of the city and county. It is this combination -- commercial and political, retail and government uses, housed within Italianate, Commercial, and the Classical style buildings centered around the town square -- that make it an important example of development in a small turn-of-the century Midwestern city.

In a broader context, the Valparaiso Downtown Commercial District is significant as an example of the social, commercial, and civic development of the Calumet region of northwestern Indiana in the period from 1870 to 1930. While its traditional ties were to agriculture, and still are to a great extent, Valparaiso's development was also inextricably linked to the phenomenal growth of Chicago during the latter half of the 19th century, and later to the industrial buildup of the entire Calumet region. By the end of the 19th century, Valparaiso prided itself as a residential city, a not too distant suburb of Chicago, easily reached by rail. The city also owed much of its flavor as a residential and cultural community to the growth and popularity of what is now Valparaiso University.

Origins and Early Development

Valparaiso was platted in 1836, as the town of Portersville, by the Portersville Land Company, whose officers included J.F.D. Lanier, president of the State Bank of Indiana in Madison. The original plat included the courthouse square at the center of town, even though it was not initially certain that Valparaiso would be the county seat. It was finally selected, however, given its location in the center of Porter County and because its developers offered to donate the courthouse square free of charge. It also lay on an

☒ See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

- Ball, T.H., Northwestern Indiana From 1800 to 1900. Chicago: Donohue and Henneberry, 1900.
- Barnhart, John D. and Donald F. Carmony, Indiana: From Frontier to Industrial Commonwealth. Vols. I & II. New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc., 1954.
- A Biographical History of Porter County. Valparaiso: American Revolution Bicentennial Committee of Porter Co., 1976.
- Brauer, Richard, Debra Griswold, and Wanda Rice, Courthouse Square Valparaiso: An Architectural Guide, 1987. Valparaiso, 1987.
- Decker, Joseph, Joseph Decker's Souvenir Book of Valparaiso, Indiana. Valparaiso, 1911.
- Engel, J. Ronald, Sacred Sands; The Struggle for Community in the Indiana Dunes. Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1983.

☒ See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State historic preservation office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☒ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 14 acres

UTM References

A

1	6
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4	9	4	7	1	0
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4	5	9	0	5	7	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B

1	6
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4	9	5	2	2	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	5	9	0	5	7	0
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Zone Easting Northing

D

1	6
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4	9	4	8	5	0
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4	5	9	0	2	8	0
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Zone Easting Northing

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at the northeast corner of West Lincolnway and Napoleon Street, proceed north along the east right-of-way line for North Napoleon Street to the south right-of-way line for the alley between West Lincolnway and West Jefferson Avenue;

☒ See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The Valparaiso National Register Downtown Commercial District's boundaries delineate the primary area of both commercial and governmental activity for Porter County and the city of Valparaiso. The boundaries of the district are typically defined by streets or alleys that demarcate the city's commercial core from its surrounding residential and

☒ See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title John W. Stamper, Architect/Architectural Historian

organization _____ date June 30, 1989

street & number 106 North Coquillard Drive telephone 219-287-2198

city or town South Bend state Indiana zip code 46617

Assisted by: Alice Koby, Erika Pistorius-Stamper, Jeffrey Wolf, Nancy Pekarek

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The majority of the buildings in the district were built between 1870 and 1930. Representing an eclectic progression of architecture, the building styles range from Greek Revival, Italianate and Queen Anne, to Classical Revival and Chicago Commercial styles. The district's variety of age and style lends character and interest to the otherwise homogenous context of the area as a historical commercial complex. Of the contributing commercial buildings in the district there are four Greek Revival structures, thirty-one Italianate, one Romanesque, one Stick Style, one Queen Anne, four Classical Revival style, one late Gothic style, and thirty-five Commercial style buildings.

The Italianate style predominated in Valparaiso as it did in much of the rest of the country between 1870 and 1890. Some of the best examples of the style in the district include buildings housing the Valparaiso Office Supply (bldg. #5 photo 4), Neeley's Men's Shop (bldg. #10 photos 5, 6), Mane Elegance (bldg. #11 photos 5, 6), Falvey's (bldg. #21 photo 10), Country on the Square (bldg. #21 photo 10) and Gils Drugs (bldg. #18 photo 9). All are characterized by some form of arched windows set in two to three story facades which are topped by a prominent cornice line.

The prevailing Commercial Style of the 1910's and 20's demonstrates the strong influence of Chicago functionalism on Valparaiso's architecture at a time of general prosperity and conservatism. Examples of this style include Horn's Block (bldgs. #14, 15 photo 7), the Dierking Barber Shop and Apartment Building (bldg. #76 photo 40), the Gratz Piano Building (bldg. #53 photo 26), and most importantly, Lowenstine's Department Store (bldgs. #98, 99, 100 photo 52). The latter, with its white glazed terra cotta facade, exhibits the influence of Louis Sullivan's Carson Pirie Scott Store in Chicago.

Bank buildings in the district generally have a more prominent identity than do the store and office structures. Both the Gainer Bank (bldg. #29 photos 14, 15) at 101 East Lincolnway and the First National Bank (bldg. #67 photo 33) at 14 East Indiana Avenue are in the Classical Revival Style with limestone facades highlighted by Classical columns, cornices, and pediments, elements appropriately suggesting stability, tradition and security.

The city's governmental buildings range from the Castellated Gothic Style of the Old Jail House (bldg. #72 photo 36) and the Italianate Style of the Sheriff's Residence (bldg. #71 photo 35) to the Classical Revival Style of the Porter County Courthouse (bldg. #45 photos 20, 21, 22) and the present City Hall (bldg. #4 photo 3). The city's opera house, G.A.R. Memorial Hall (bldg. #73 photos 35, 37), is in the Romanesque Style. All of these buildings are distinguished from the surrounding commercial buildings by their size, stylistic details, and by a placement on their sites that allows for landscaped lawns and formal approaches.

The district is surrounded primarily by contiguous historical and a few non-historical residential, religious, and commercial buildings. (There are probable National Register-eligible residential districts located to the northeast along East Jefferson

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Street and to the north along Franklin and Michigan Streets.) Valparaiso University is located approximately ten blocks east of the historic district.

With the exception of one block on the courthouse square, which now has a modern bank building, the district possesses a high degree of cohesiveness. The prevailing scale and materials reflect common values and resources.

Of the 101 buildings and one object within the boundaries of the district, 80 can be considered as contributing to the overall historical and architectural character of the area. The map of the district graphically identifies all contributing and noncontributing structures as well as parking lots.

The following is an inventory of pivotal, contributing, and non-contributing buildings in the district. Pivotal and contributing resources (C) are significant to the historic and architectural development of the district, possess compatible design elements, and maintain the scale, use, and texture of the district. Non-contributing resources (NC) have little or no architectural significance or do not fall within the period of significance of the district.

The order used in arranging the buildings in the inventory begins in the northwest corner of the district and lists buildings from west to east (left to right on the map) for the north then the south side of the street. Buildings on the north-south streets are then listed beginning at the northwest corner of the district, and proceeding south (top to bottom on the map) for the west then the east side of the street.

West Jefferson Street (South Side)

1. 53 West Jefferson Street, Clay House Ceramics
(C), c. 1855, Greek Revival

Photo 1

A two story brick house with gable to the street and with frieze board and returns. Segmentally-arched windows have hood moldings. A porch on the north and east sides has Tuscan Doric columns supporting a plain entablature. Front door has sidelights and transom framed by Classical pilasters.

East Jefferson Street (South Side)

2. 12 East Jefferson Street, Nylook Beauty Salon
(NC), c. 1950

Photo 2

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5. 162 West Lincolnway, Valparaiso Office Supply (originally Opera House)
(C), 1871-74, Italianate Photos 4, 5

A two-story brick building with tall, narrow, round-arched windows framed by brick pilasters and crenelated brick corbels. The original windows have been replaced by glass block. The parapet has corbelled brick piers framing lozenge-shaped horizontal panels. The first floor has been altered by a modern storefront with plate glass and porcelain panels, shaded by a metal awning. The building was designed by Christian Lembke.

The building had been known for many years as the Grand Opera House. This first "opera house" of Valparaiso was known as the Fiske Opera House. While the lower floor housed businesses, the spacious second floor was designed to be a gathering place for live entertainment. To accommodate the up to 700 seated people and the weight of the stage, the upper floor is supported by a series of metal posts secured over a brick wall in the basement extending the entire length of the building.

Apparently the placement of the Opera House in Valparaiso was well conceived because of the town's easy access by rail to the major city of Chicago. A feature from a magazine printed in 1900 states that "Valparaiso is one of the best 'show towns' on the line and is visited by a majority of the leading companies." (From Headlight, "Sights and Sounds Along the Grand Trunk Railroad.") After 1893, this honor shifted to Memorial Hall on Indiana Ave.

In May of 1900, the building was purchased from John Brodie, a contractor who built the portion of the Grand Trunk R.R. between Chicago and Valparaiso, by the Chekusuk Lodge #56 of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows. The building is still owned by this group, whose members continue to hold meetings on the second floor. Although the rows of seats are gone, the stage still remains, as do the remnants of gaslight fixtures along the walls.

The storefront level has seen many businesses come and go; one of the most notable tenants was Jacob Lowenstine, who in 1885 operated what was known as the "Grand Opera One Price Clothing House." This small concern was to eventually grow into downtown Valparaiso's most prominent department store. Since the turn of the century other businesses have occupied the storefront, including an undertaker and furniture firm, and a Sears-Roebuck store.

6. 160 West Lincolnway (former Commercial Building)
(C), c. 1920, Commercial Style

Photos 4, 5

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8. 74 West Lincolnway, Timber Shop
(C), c. 1910, Commercial Style

Photos 5, 6

A two-story brown brick corner building with two paired windows on the second floor, with limestone sills and keystones. Topped by a corbelled brick parapet. The first floor has been altered with a modern wood and glass shopfront.

9. 72 West Lincolnway, The Sport Shop
(C), c. 1910, Commercial Style

Photos 5, 6

A two-story brown brick building identical to 74 West Lincolnway, but separated from it by a party wall. A canopy extends over the sidewalk from a side door.

10. 70 West Lincolnway, Neeley's Men's Shop
(C), c. 1880, Italianate

Photos 5, 6

A two-story brick building with three round-arched windows on the second floor, the wall topped by a corbelled brick parapet. The first floor has been altered with a modern wood, brick, and glass shopfront.

11. 68 West Lincolnway, Mane Elegance Hair Salon
(C), c. 1870, Italianate

Photos 5, 6

A two-story brick building with three round-arched windows on the second floor, with raised frames and keystones. The wall is capped by a corbelled brick parapet with stucco-covered panels framed by brackets. The first floor has been altered with a metal and glass shopfront.

12. 66 West Lincolnway, Barry's Photography
(C), c. 1890, Italianate

Photos 5, 6

A two-story brick building with three rectangular windows on the second floor, with rounded top corners and pressed metal hood moldings and limestone sills. Wall is capped by a metal parapet. The first floor has been altered with a modern glass and opaque shopfront.

13. 64 West Lincolnway, Upstairs Downstairs Pizza
(C), c. 1890, Italianate

Photos 5, 6

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high segmentally arched windows. There is evidence of windows and doors originally located one-half level below ground, which have now been partially covered by the sidewalk. Windows on the second floor are segmentally arched with a thin straight limestone lintel across the top. Horizontal beltcourses of sawtooth pattern brick extends across the facade at the top levels of the windows.

East Lincolnway (North Side)

19. 1 East Lincolnway, Joanna Joseph, Ltd.
(C), c. 1870, Greek Revival

Photos 10, 12

A three-story brick building with three evenly spaced windows on the second and third floors. They are trimmed with pressed metal sills and lintels, which are in the shape of a low pediment. A bracketed metal cornice was moved to this building from a remodeled structure at 103 East Lincolnway. The first floor has been altered with the addition of a modern wood, glass and stone shopfront. The building's west facade, facing Washington Street, has windows similar to those of the south facade, but smaller. Those on the first floor have been bricked in.

20. 3-5 East Lincolnway, Cloths Loft/Old Style Inn
(C), c. 1870, Greek Revival

Photos 10, 11, 12

A three-story brick building with seven evenly spaced double hung windows on the second and third floors, with pressed metal sills and lintels. The facade is topped by a corbelled brick parapet with dentil work. The first floor has been altered with the addition of modern wood, glass and stone shopfronts, one with a mansard roof. A door in the center bay gives access to a stairs leading to the upper floors.

21. 7-9 East Lincolnway, Falvey's/Country on the Square
(C), c. 1875, Italianate

Photos 10, 11, 12

A three-story brick building with round-arched windows on the second and third floors, with limestone sills and keystones. One half of the facade has been painted grey while the other half retains its original brown brick color. The top of the parapet has been removed from the painted portion.

22. 11 East Lincolnway, D. Butterfield Attorney
(C), c. 1880, Italianate

Photos 11, 12

A three-story brick building with rectangular windows with drop down head moldings on the second and third floors. The windows on the second floor have been partially

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28. 23 East Lincolnway, Binder's Diamonds
(C), c. 1890, Queen Anne Style

Photos 11, 13

A three-story brick building with the corner cut at a diagonal. The second floor is highlighted by projecting bay windows, including an octagonal bay at the diagonal corner. The second and third floor windows are topped by pedimented hood moldings. A large round-arched window appears on the third floor of the south facade. The original metal cornice has been removed and the third floor window of the diagonal corner has been removed and filled in with block. Saw-toothed beltcourses separate each floor. The first floor has a modern shopfront with a mansard roof and brick and wood sheathing.

29. 101 (A) East Lincolnway, Gainer Bank, (formerly Farmers' State Bank)
(C), 1927, Classical Revival

Photos 14, 15

A two-story building with limestone cladding above a granite base. The south facade features a two-story round-arched opening framed by colossal fluted pilasters with Ionic capitals and smooth-faced piers which support an entablature, dentiled cornice, and pediment. The opening originally contained a brass, pedimented doorframe and window mullions that repeated the curve of the arch. It presently contains a modern tinted and spandrel glass curtain wall. Flanking the entrance on either side are tall narrow recessed panels with a single narrow window on each floor. A spandrel panel between the windows contains an eagle inscribed in a circle. Above the top window is a flat yellow sandstone panel, and above, a keystone intersects the molding. The parapet, flanking the central pediment, has swags and an egg and dart motif.

The building's west facade is lined with five round-arched windows on the first floor set in a rusticated wall. The second floor is articulated with nine rectangular windows divided by pilasters supporting a projecting cornice with a parapet. Yellow smooth-faced sandstone panels are placed above the second floor windows. The end bays are identical to those flanking the front entrance with narrow windows set in recessed panels, and topped with parapets with swags and egg and dart moldings.

The bank was founded by Joseph H. Gardner in 1874; he was a man respected in Valparaiso for his wisdom in financial matters. His institution was first known as the Farmers' National Bank, later changed to the Farmers' State Bank. It was located at the corner of Lincolnway and Washington, in the building which housed the Music Academy. In February of 1926, a fire gutted this building, leading to plans to construct a fire-proof structure.

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34. 119 East Lincolnway, Casbons
(C), c. 1880, Italianate

Photo 16

35. 123 East Lincolnway, Carlson Electric Co.
(C), c. 1880, Italianate

Photo 16

West Lincolnway (South Side)

36. 173 West Lincolnway, (Former Standard Oil Gas Station)
(NC), c. 1955, Modern Service Station

Photo 17

37. 167 West Lincolnway, Top Drawer Resale Shop
(NC), c. 1890, Commercial Style

Photo 18

38. 165 West Lincolnway, Top Drawer Resale Shop
(NC), c. 1890, Commercial Style

Photo 18

39. 163 West Lincolnway, Top Drawer Resale Shop
(NC), c. 1890, Commercial Style

Photo 18

40. 161 West Lincolnway, Advertising Management Center
(C), c. 1920, Commercial Style

Photo 19

A two-story brick building with two rectangular windows on the second floor with limestone sills and angled brick soldier course lintels with limestone keystones and endcaps. The facade is capped by a soldier course brick frieze with a projecting plain limestone cornice, and a brick parapet with limestone copping. The first floor has been altered by the addition of a modern storefront and signage.

41. 157-159 West Lincolnway, HFC Financial Center/European Shop and Delicatessen
(C), c. 1880, Italianate

Photo 19

A two-story brick building with five evenly spaced segmentally arched double hung windows with shutters on the second floor. The facade is capped by a corbelled brick cornice with evenly spaced brackets. The HFC shopfront is a modern alteration, while the delicatessen shopfront has been remodeled with a historically compatible shopfront.

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windows of the second floor are divided into two levels by recessed limestone spandrel panels, marking an intervening level of offices.

The third floor, originally contained within a prominent mansard roof, is now enclosed within a low limestone-clad wall with abstracted paired corner pilasters and simple rectangular windows. Flat decorative relief panels separate the windows of the entrance pavilions, and a square clock is placed in the central bay. The top cornice is a simple projecting molding.

The building is a combination of the 19th and 20th century, its dual nature being not only the result of a devastating fire, but of the continuing tradition of a courthouse square serving as a focal point of an ever-changing community.

The county's first courthouse was a frame structure built in 1837. The needs of a growing population demanded a more permanent structure, and so a brick courthouse was built in 1853. By the 1880's even this was too small; in 1883 the present dressed limestone structure was begun, one that was seen to be a better reflection of the growing prosperity and importance of Porter County.

Work on the two and one-half-story structure was completed in 1885. The architect was John C. Cochrane. When completed, the new courthouse, with a 4-sided clock tower which could be seen for miles around, was said to be one of the most distinguished looking in the state.

However, on the night of December 27, 1934, fire destroyed all but its four walls. Not much of the interior was salvaged, but firemen did manage to save the records of the recorder's office. The county was now faced with the decision as to whether to raze what was left, and rebuild, or to restore what remained. Ultimately, the four remaining walls become the base for the present courthouse. The architect, John D. Wilson, modified the structure to give it more modern appearance: he added a half story, and flattened the roofline. He also removed the stairways to the north and south porches, so that the entrances were now at the ground floor level.

Since this rebuilding in 1935-36, the building has undergone numerous interior room remodelings. Outside on the lawn area, new walkways and lights were added in the 1970's. In addition, a modern sculpture, entitled "Caritas," is placed in a rectangular limestone fountain outside the north entrance. Built of steel and limestone, 26 and-a-half feet high, this piece is an "amalgamation of traditional symbols...butterfly, eagle, phoenix, and peacock." It is the creation of Fredrick L. Frey, then an associate professor of art at Valparaiso University. It stands in stark contrast to the old building--the leap of nearly a century within just a few steps of one another.

Today the county's courthouse is again overcrowded, too small to accommodate the needs of a population which has doubled in the past 30 years. Yet it is still the

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have been replaced by smaller glass-block and vent windows. The remaining area of the openings has been bricked in. The first floor storefront has metal framed plate glass, stone, and wood paneling. The west facade has the same window treatment on the second floor as on the north facade. The first floor of the west facade has a modern brick and metal storefront with an asphalt roof awning.

51. 206 East Lincolnway, Sievers Insurance
(C), c. 1925, Commercial Style

Photos 25, 26

52. 208 East Lincolnway, H&R Block Income Tax
(C), c. 1925, Commercial Style

Photos 25, 26

53. 210 East Lincolnway, Gratz Piano
(C), c. 1920, Chicago Commercial Style

Photo 26

A single-story brown brick building with an asymmetrical facade with the door to the right, framed by projecting brick piers, and a long plate glass window to the left, with a third brick pier at the far left end. Each brick pier extends above the parapet and is capped by a limestone block. The parapet has decorative brickwork, rectangular in shape, delineated by soldier brick courses with stone inserts at the corners, each having a raised quatrefoil pattern. The entrance door, with sidelights and transom, is recessed in a small vestibule which features a mosaic tile floor and a pressed metal ceiling. The store window is shaded by a black canvas awning.

54. 212 East Lincolnway, Antiques/Actionwear
(C), 1921, Commercial Style

Photos 26, 27

A two-story painted brick building with brick piers dividing the facade into uneven bays. The central three bays have a recessed entranceway, while the outer two bays have large plate glass windows. The brick piers are articulated with vertical brick strips. The piers originally supported an elaborate metal cornice which has been removed and replaced in 1982 with a patterned wooden cornice of horizontal panels and square decorative blocks above the piers. The original second floor windows have been partially bricked in and replaced by industrial sash windows. The building's west alley facade is of concrete block, projecting piers, and large twenty-one-pane windows. The building originally served as a new car showroom, and features inside a large hydraulic elevator to carry the automobiles to the second floor.

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East Indiana Avenue (South Side)

61. 2 East Indiana Avenue, First National Bank Trust Services/Barber Shop
(NC), c. 1900/1980, Other Photo 31

62. 4 East Indiana Avenue, Allanson Insurance
(NC), c. 1890/1965, International Style Photos 31, 32

63. 6 East Indiana Avenue, Hand, Muenich and Wilk, Attorneys
(C), c. 1920, Commercial Style Photos 31, 32

A two-story yellow brick building with three windows on the second floor, the center one larger than the other two. The windows are framed by shutters. The wall surface above is decorated with brickwork in rectangular designs with limestone corner blocks. The first floor has been altered with a modern commercial front with glass and spandrel glass framed in metal.

64. 8 East Indiana Avenue, (Former Linkimer's Shoes)
(C), c. 1920, Commercial Style Photos 31, 32

A two-story brick building with corrugated metal siding added to the second floor. The three second floor windows have been replaced by glass block. The first floor has modern plate glass windows, shaded by a canvas awning. The wall surface between the first and second floor windows has brick panels framed by soldier course bricks with stone inserts at the corners. Three diamond-shape decorative brick designs are located in the panels.

65. 10 East Indiana Avenue, (Former Linkimer's Shoes)
(C), c. 1920, Commercial Style Photos 31, 32

66. 12 East Indiana Avenue, First National Bank Addition
(NC), 1984, Post-Modern Classical Revival Photos 31, 32

67. 14 East Indiana Avenue, First National Bank
(C), 1903, Classical Revival Photo 33

A two-story brick building with a limestone facade that is divided into three bays by engaged Doric column and end piers which are on high pedestals and rise through

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72. (Behind) 102 East Indiana Avenue, Old Jail House
(C), 1871, (National Register), Gothic Revival

Photo 36

The Old Jail is adjacent to the rear of the Sheriff's Residence. It is a castellated Gothic Style building of rough-hewn stone blocks. It has a prominent crenellated square tower at its juncture with the Residence, and small octagonal turrets with battlements at the rear corners. Tall, narrow windows with iron bars have drop down stone hood moldings and limestone sills. A stone wall added later on the west side, encloses a yard. A small porch attached to the side of the Residence gives access to the main tower.

The architect of the building was R. Rose; the builders were the local firm of Shade and Lembke.

Since the early 1970's, the Old Jail and the Sheriff's Residence have served as the home of the Porter County Historical Society, and their museum which previously had been located on the fourth floor of the courthouse. Between 1974-76, the contents of the society's museum were transferred to the two old buildings, which were slightly modified on the interior to accommodate the many artifacts and mementos of the county's early history. Most of these have been donated by local citizens. The curators of the museum, Mr. and Mrs. Trevor Stalburn, have served in this capacity for over 20 years.

73. 104 East Indiana Avenue, G.A.R. Memorial Hall
(C), 1893, (National Register), Romanesque

Photos 35, 37

A two-story red brick structure with corner turrets, and a large round-arched entrance opening with four multi-paned wood doors and a fanlight transom. The doorway arch is contained in a projecting central pavilion topped by a truncated gable and contains a large fanlight window on the second level, below which is a limestone tablet with the inscription "1893 Memorial Hall; A Monument to the Soldiers and Sailors of 1861-5." The brick arches above the door and the upper level fanlight are corbelled soldier course bricks in seven layers. The corner turrets have limestone beltcourses above the windows, and are topped by pressed metal cornices and truncated conical roofs. The towers taper outward at the base. A parapet wall between the towers and the central gable has corbelled brick brackets supporting a straight entablature which steps down and curves downward at the ends to join the metal cornice of the turrets.

The building's east and west facades are articulated with segmentally arched windows, a corbelled brick parapet, and a pressed metal cornice. Shallow pavilion wings with hipped roofs occur about halfway down the sides. They have a small wood entrance door flanked by two windows. A large lunette window appears in the center above the door.

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South Lafayette Street (West Side)

74. 56 South Lafayette Street, ROM Computer
(NC), c. 1960, Commercial Style

Photo 38

North Lafayette Street (East Side)

75. 8 North Lafayette Street, Sunshine Domestics
(NC), c. 1900, Commercial

Photo 39

North Washington Street (West Side)

76. 23 North Washington Street, Dierking's Barber Shop/Apartments
(C), c. 1930, Commercial Style

Photo 40

A three-story yellow brick building with decorative red brick in corbelled design along the parapet and a beltcourse between the second and third floor on the east and north facades. Smaller red brick beltcourses are located at the top of windows. Windows are Chicago style with a large fixed center pane flanked by smaller 1/1 double hung sash. First floor has original brick piers and plate glass shop windows.

77. 21 North Washington Street, McNamara's Cuck-oo Club
(C), c. 1930, Commercial Style

Photo 40

A two-story brick building with a decorative parapet topped by a stone coping and with rectangular stone frames flanking a carved stone cartouche. A beltcourse separates the parapet from two evenly spaced paired windows with limestone frames and metal awnings. The first floor has original brick piers with wood frame store front.

78. 17-19 North Washington Street, Lake Shore Cable Vision
(NC), c. 1955, International Style

Photo 40

79. 15 North Washington Street, Langer and Langer Professional Corporation
(C), c. 1880, Italianate

Photo 40

A two-story painted brick building with a corbelled brick parapet and three round-arched windows with brick relieving arches on the second floor. Below is a

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of 3/1 double hung windows with limestone lintels with a triangular keystone. The first floor has a modern wood storefront with a sign above the entry.

North Washington Street (East Side)

86. 24 North Washington Street, Bus Depot
(C), c. 1880, Italianate Style

Photos 46, 47

A two-story painted brick building with a corbelled brick cornice with fretwork and four large brackets. The second floor has three round-arched windows with keystones and limestone sills, stucco cladding with incised lines, and corner quoins. The first floor is brick with a modern store front and a flat wooden canopy. The north facade has two round-arched windows and one Chicago style window. The first floor has four evenly spaced round-arched windows, partially filled in, and a center door. The building originally served as the quarters for a newspaper, The Messenger.

87. 22 North Washington Street, Garbison Construction Co.
(C), c. 1925, Late Gothic Revival

Photos 46, 47

A two-story beige brick building with limestone window and door trim and base. The second floor has three windows, a large fixed pane window in the center, and two smaller ones on either side. The first floor has a large window to the left of center, with a small window at the left and a lancet-arched door at the right with a limestone frame. A raised panel at the top of the frame has a lamp in carved relief. In the corners are carved medallions. The window and door frames are quoined.

88. 20 North Washington Street, Valparaiso Pet and Hobby
(C), c. 1890, Italianate

Photo 47

A two-story brown brick building with a corbelled brick parapet with a brick beltcourse above the second floor windows which are segmentally arched double hung with limestone sills. The first floor has been altered by the addition of a modern wooden storefront with a canvas awning.

89. 18 North Washington Street, Valparaiso Pet and Hobby
(C), c. 1890, Italianate

Photo 47

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South Franklin Street (East Side)

95. 53 South Franklin Street, Denise's/Focus Photo
(C), c. 1880, Italianate

Photo 51, 52

A two-story brick building with seven windows on the second floor with pressed metal hood moldings. The original windows have been replaced by fixed pane glass. The original metal cornice has been removed. The first floor has been altered by the addition of modern wood storefronts.

96. 55 South Franklin Street, Make Mine Country
(C), c. 1920, Commercial Style

Photo 51, 52

A two-story building with a stepped parapet, end piers with vertical bands of brick ending at the top in arches. The second floor has a single large window. The first floor has been altered by the addition of a modern storefront.

97. 57 South Franklin Street, Lowenstine's Clock
(C), c. 1915

Photo 52

A freestanding clock on the sidewalk in front of Lowenstine's Department Store. A round-faced clock with two sides, it stands on an iron pole.

98. 57 South Franklin Street, Lowenstine's Department Store
(C), c. 1900, remodelled 1912, Chicago Commercial Style

Photos 51, 52

A three-story brick building remodelled in 1912 and joined to adjacent buildings at 59 and 61-63 South Franklin. The facade is clad with white glazed terra cotta with piers supporting a decorative projecting cornice with fretwork and plaques with raised letters "J.L." (Jacob Lowenstine) beneath. The piers are capped by festoons. They frame bays of three windows each, with decorative terra cotta spandrel panels between the second and third floors. The windows of the second floor are taller than those of the third floor. The first floor has large display windows recessed behind an open loggia framed at the top and sides with continuous egg and dart moldings. The plate glass windows have opaque blue transom panels. The loggia is shaded by a retractable canvas awning. Altogether, the building is nine bays across.

Lowenstine's Department Store, until its sale in 1987, was a business owned and operated by a single family for just over 100 years. It had been in the same location on Franklin Street since the turn of the century, and was regarded as "the anchor for the city's downtown."

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102. 67 South Franklin Street, Court Restaurant
(C), c. 1890, Italianate

Photo 53

A two-story brick building with a pressed metal cornice and four rectangular windows on the second floor with new fixed pane glass. The first floor has been remodelled with a brick wall with piers and arched windows.

103. 69 South Franklin Street, Court Restaurant
(C), c. 1885, Romanesque

Photo 53

A two-story brick building with three grouped round-arched windows on the second floor, the center one being larger than the two flanking it. The first floor has been altered similar to 67 South Franklin.

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and more durable brick buildings, each one reflecting the pride and individuality of their builders. Buildings from this period include 53 West Jefferson Street (bldg. 53 photo 1), and the Sheriff's Residence (bldg. 71 photo 35). The most outstanding of these was the three story Academy of Music Building, constructed in 1864-65 (now demolished) at the southwest corner of Lincolnway and Washington. Such buildings were usually constructed of brick from one of Valparaiso's two brickyards.

The Late Nineteenth Century

Though Valparaiso never achieved a wide reputation as a manufacturing center, numerous small industries and businesses were developed that provided employment for its population and profits for its entrepreneurs and bankers. These included a woolen mill, a pin factory, a paint and varnish factory, followed by the Chicago Mica Company, the Chautauqua Furniture Company, the Parke Varnish Company, and Urschel Laboratories. Valparaiso never had a boom period such as that experienced by many other cities. It was never dependent upon a single large industry. Agriculture remained a strong economic base. The produce and dairy products of the surrounding farmlands were fed through the city and shipped by rail to markets in Chicago, and after 1906, to the steel city of Gary, and Whiting with its Standard Oil refineries.

In 1889, the Valparaiso Improvement Association was organized to aid the business of the city and to encourage new industries to move here. This organization was very active in advertising the advantages and possibilities of Valparaiso. The Chamber of Commerce was organized in 1909, which most of the city's prominent business and professional people joined. Its motto was "A larger and better Valparaiso."

Reflecting the prosperity of this period was the construction of numerous commercial buildings in the district, including 68 West Lincolnway (bldg. #11 photos 5, 6), 66 and 64 West Lincolnway (bldgs #12, 13 photos 5, 6), 54-56 West Lincolnway (bldg. #17 photos 7, 8), 52 West Lincolnway (bldg. #18 photos 8, 9), 7-9 East Lincolnway (bldg. #21 photos 10, 11), 23 East Lincolnway (bldg. #28 photos 11, 13), and 53 South Franklin Street (bldg. #95 photos 51, 52). By the end of the century, the city boasted numerous retail businesses, three hotels, three banks, and two newspapers.

Typical among these businesses was Stinchfield & Fehrman Company which occupied the ground floor of the former Opera House at 162 West Lincolnway (bldg. #5 photos 4, 5). The firm was organized in 1903, having taken over the business of William LePell, a pioneer merchant in Valparaiso. The company sold furniture and pianos. A second business was Lilienthal & Szold, a department store located at 1 East Lincolnway (bldg. #19 photos 10, 12). Leo Lilienthal had moved to Valparaiso in 1905 and purchased a small store which he expanded by 1909 into a full service department store.

Many of the owners of these businesses joined one or more of the benevolent societies or fraternities which sprang up during this period as a reflection of community and

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Department Store at 57-63 South Franklin Street (bldgs. #98, 99, 100 photo 52). It was founded in 1885 by Jacob Lowenstine and gradually grew to encompass three buildings on the east side of the courthouse square.

Two significant bank buildings were constructed in the district during this period, the first being the First National Bank at 14 East Indiana Avenue (bldg. #67 photo 33). Built in 1903 to replace the bank's original two-story frame building, it is an excellent example of the Classical Revival style. The bank had been established in 1889 by William E. Pinney, an entrepreneur, lawyer, farmer, landowner, and politician. It is significant that the last building to be constructed in the district during this period was the impressive limestone Farmer's State Bank (now Gainer Bank) at 101(A) East Lincolnway (bldg. #29 photo 14). Founded by Joseph H. Gardner in 1874, it was a major rival of the First National Bank, as well as the Valparaiso National Bank (now the Indiana Federal Bank). The latter had been located in a two-story brick building on the west side of the courthouse square, the site now occupied by the bank's new four-story modern building.

The focal point of the business district was and continues to be the Porter County Courthouse (bldg. #45 photos 20, 21, 22). From a simple frame structure to a brick building, to the far more imposing limestone edifice constructed in 1883-85, the courthouse has traditionally been the symbol and gauge of the community's prosperity and well-being. Together with the other public buildings and retail businesses which surround it, the courthouse square-business district was the commercial heart of the city of Valparaiso and of all of Porter County. The wide variety of architectural styles within the district present a visual history of the emergence of Valparaiso from the 19th to the 20th century.

Today, Valparaiso continues to be primarily a residential city, with commercial connections to the industrial Calumet region. It continues to attract people away from the city of Chicago, those who are looking for the benefits of "small town" living. Valparaiso University continues to flourish, and the downtown area is going through a revitalization process meant to attract business from both Lake and Porter counties. As if to emphasize this continuation of Valparaiso's character, the G.A.R. Memorial Hall is still used for the performing arts, and local farmers continue to bring in their produce to sell on the courthouse square. However, both the expansion of the economic center of Valparaiso toward the northern section of the city during the 1970's and the construction of Southlake Mall in Lake County along Route 30, has meant a decline in the prosperity of Valparaiso's downtown business district. Today, efforts are being made to reverse this trend.

Historic and Architectural Cohesiveness

The district is a cohesive collection of the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century resources that form the county seat of Valparaiso. Where possible, the boundaries are drawn to exclude large parking lots and noncontributing buildings. Only

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then east 1-1/2 blocks along the south right-of-way line for the alley to the east right-of-way line for the alley between Lafayette and Washington Streets; then north along the east right-of-way line for the alley to the south right-of-way line for West Jefferson Avenue;

then east along the south right-of-way line of Jefferson Avenue, across Washington Street, to the west right-of-way line for the alley between Washington Street and Franklin Avenue; then south along the west right-of-way line for the alley to the south right-of-way line for the alley between East Jefferson Avenue and East Lincolnway;

then east 1-1/2 blocks to the west right-of-way line for North Michigan Avenue; then south along the west right-of-way line for North Michigan Avenue to the southwest corner of the intersection of Michigan Avenue and East Lincolnway;

then east along the south right-of-way line for East Lincolnway to the southwest corner of Morgan Street and East Lincolnway; then south along the west right-of-way line for South Morgan Street to the alley between East Lincolnway and East Indiana Avenue;

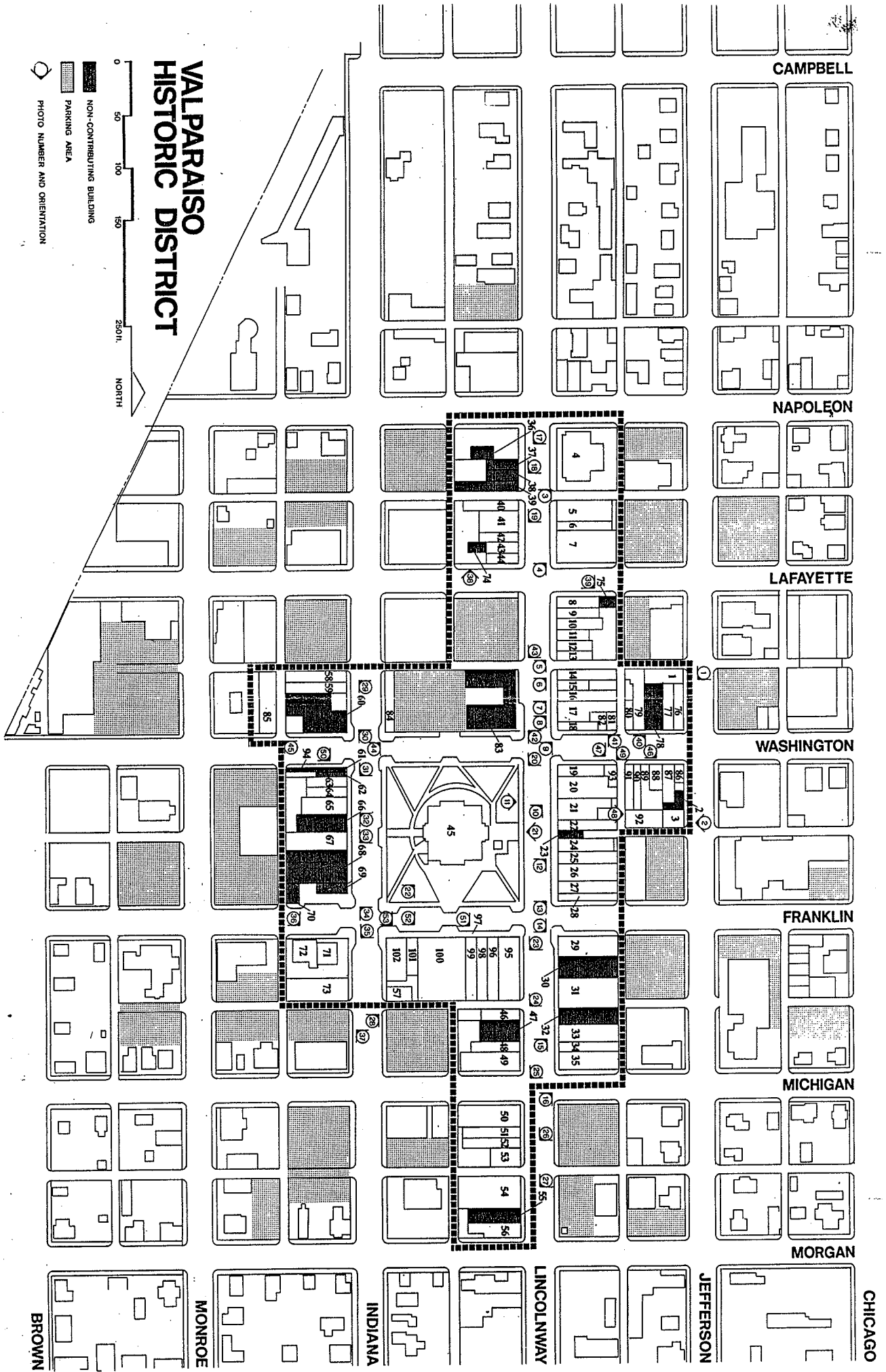
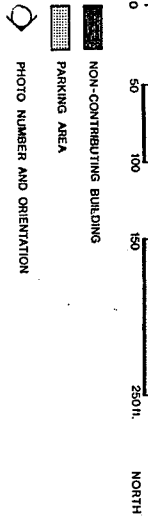
then west 1-1/2 blocks along the north right-of-way line for the alley to the intersection with the west right-of-way line for the alley between South Franklin Avenue and South Michigan Avenue; then south along the west right-of-way line for the alley, across East Indiana Avenue, to the intersection with the north right-of-way line for the alley between Indiana Avenue and Monroe Street;

then west along the north right-of-way line for the alley, across South Franklin Avenue and South Washington Street to the west right-of-way line for South Washington Street; then south along the west right-of-way line for South Washington Street to the south property line of the second lot south of the alley;

then west along the south property line of the second lot south of the alley to the east right-of-way line for the alley between Lafayette and Washington Streets; then north, across West Indiana Avenue to the north right-of-way line for the alley between Lincolnway and Indiana Avenue;

then west, across South Lafayette Street, to the east right-of-way line for South Napoleon Street; then north along the east right-of-way line for South Napoleon Street to the origin at the northeast corner of West Lincolnway and Napoleon Street.

VALPARAISO HISTORIC DISTRICT



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☒ See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State historic preservation office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☒ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 14 acres

UTM References

A

1	6	4	9	4	7	1	0	4	5	9	0	5	7	0
Zone		Easting						Northing						

C

1	6	4	9	5	2	2	0	4	5	9	0	3	3	0
Zone		Easting						Northing						

B

1	6	4	9	5	2	2	0	4	5	9	0	5	7	0
Zone		Easting						Northing						

D

1	6	4	9	4	8	5	0	4	5	9	0	2	8	0
Zone		Easting						Northing						

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at the northeast corner of West Lincolnway and Napoleon Street, proceed north along the east right-of-way line for North Napoleon Street to the south right-of-way line for the alley between West Lincolnway and West Jefferson Avenue;

☒ See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The Valparaiso National Register Downtown Commercial District's boundaries delineate the primary area of both commercial and governmental activity for Porter County and the city of Valparaiso. The boundaries of the district are typically defined by streets or alleys that demarcate the city's commercial core from its surrounding residential and

☒ See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

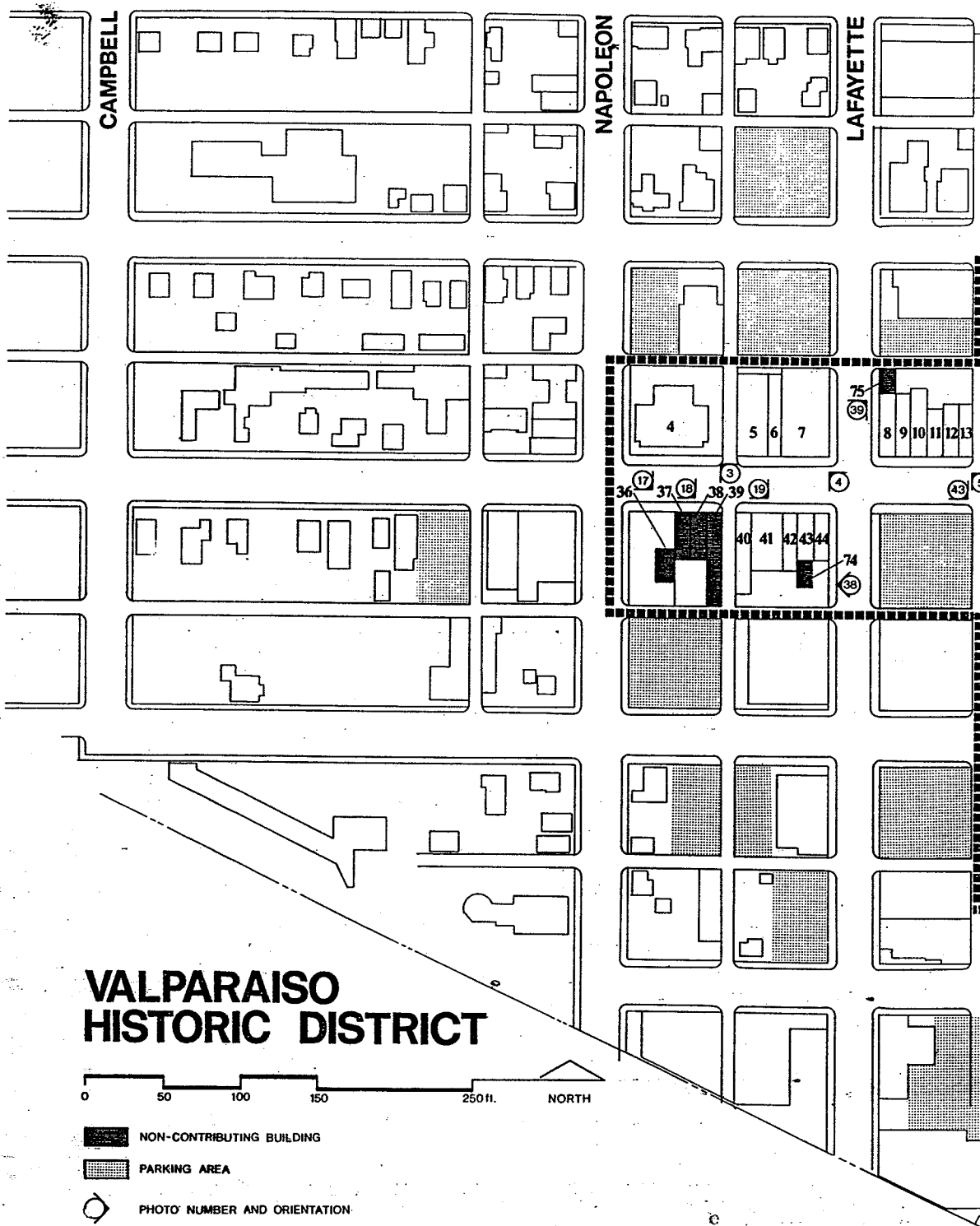
name/title John W. Stamper, Architect/Architectural Historian

organization _____ date June 30, 1989

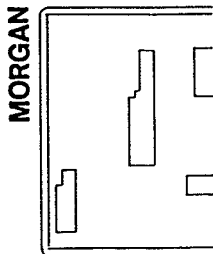
street & number 106 North Coquillard Drive telephone 219-287-2198

city or town South Bend state Indiana zip code 46617

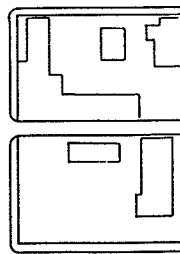
Assisted by: Alice Koby, Erika Pistorius-Stamper, Jeffrey Wolf, Nancy Pekarek



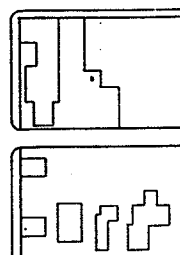
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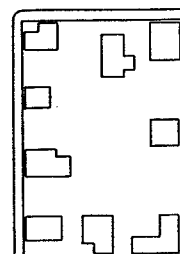
JEFFERSON



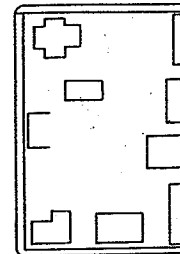
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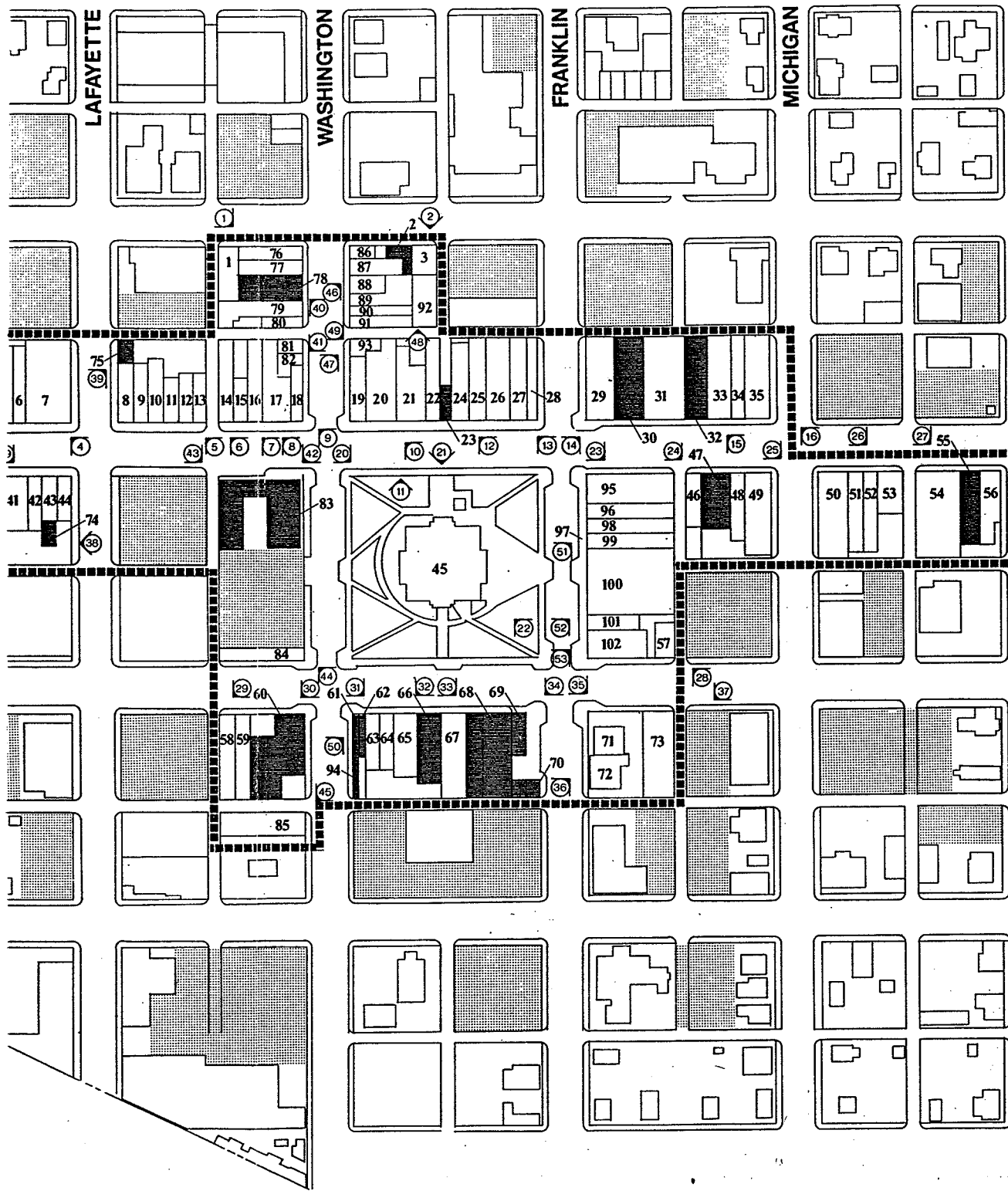
INDIANA

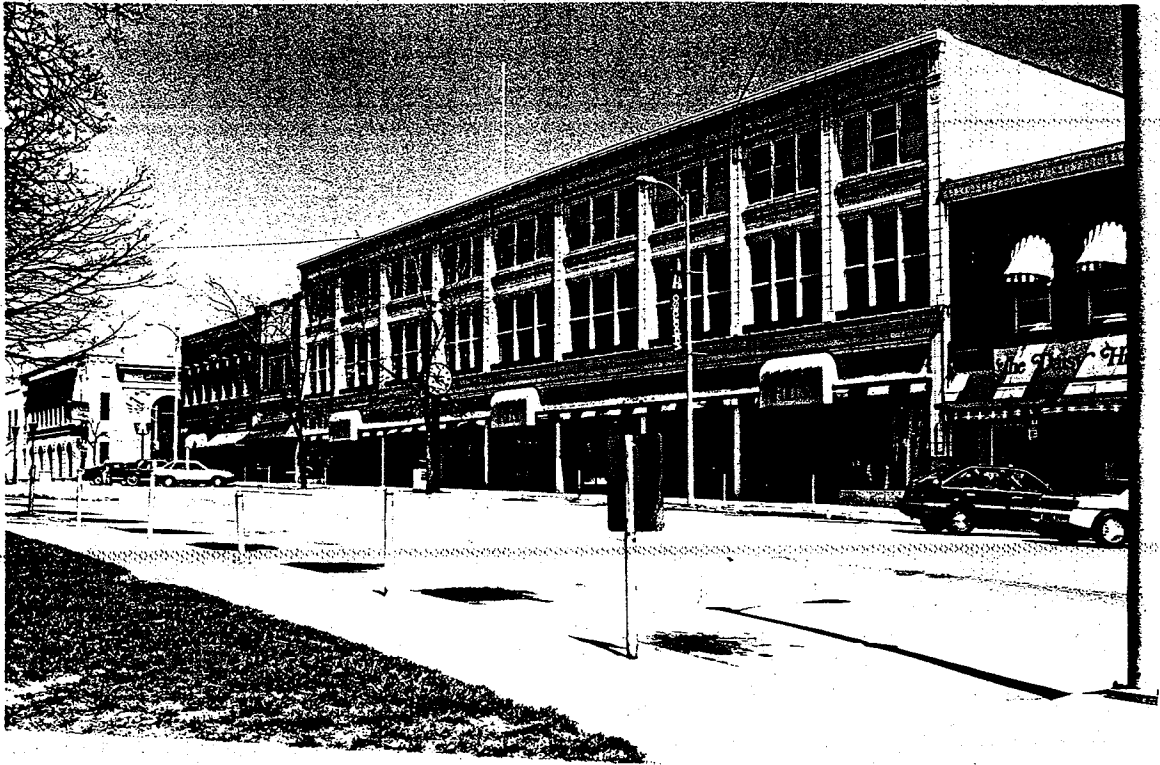


MONROE



BROWN





57, 59, 61-63 SOUTH FRANKLIN ST.

VALPARAISO DOWNTOWN COMMERCIAL DISTRICT

VALPARAISO, INDIANA

PHOTO : JOHN STAMPER

1989

NEG. : VALPARAISO CITY HALL, PLAN COMMISSION

VIEW TOWARD THE NORTHEAST OF LOWENSTINE'S
DEPARTMENT STORE

PHOTO NO. 52



